Book reviews

LIVER BIOPSY INTERPRETATION By Peter Scheuer. (Pp. 138; illustrations in colour and in black and white. 85s.) London: Baillière, Tindall, and Cassell. 1968.

In her foreword Professor Sheila Sherlock says this book contains everything that anyone should know about liver biopsy. This is a sweeping statement but near the truth. What a splendid effort the author has made to cover the difficult material so often obtained by needle biopsy! Many pathologists have to revise their attitude to liver sections if they have been used only to larger biopsies or postmortem material. The finer points of early biliary cirrhosis, when no fully developed bile duct lesion is present in the biopsy, are discussed and the lesions shown as they develop into the full picture. Viral hepatitis with the varied appearances at the different stages and intensity of the disease is well illustrated in colour. Many lesions are also shown in reticulin preparations so important to the diagnosis and prognosis of diseases of the liver. There are, in fact, 16 colour plates, 56 colour illustrations, and innumerable black and white photographs. These illustrations are uniformly excellent and most helpful. The technical section is brief but provides good advice on the sort of routine staining methods recommended.

The book is probably the best yet produced for the guidance of the pathologist who has to interpret liver biopsy findings in order to guide the physician in his treatment of the patient. It is no exaggeration to say that it must be in the library of every pathology department.

A. G. SIGNY

SURGICAL PATHOLOGY OF GYNECOLOGIC DISEASE By Cary M. Dougherty. (Pp. 704; 671 figures. 327s.) New York and London: Harper and Row, Hoeber Medical Division. 1968.

This book has resulted from the study of considerable hospital material available to the editor, who is a clinical professor of obstetrics and gynaecology. It is designed as 'a course outline' for undergraduates and postgraduates. Classified anatomically, each section is divided into sub-sections, many of which seem to overlap and to be repetitive. Pictures of the gross appearances of specimens are generally absent though there are a few line drawings; photomicrographs, on the other hand, are numerous. Many of the low-power magnifications are excellent but others convey little information. The general layout of the illustrations, so important in this type of book, is untidy.

In the text, specific information is sometimes lacking; for example, under 'Granulosa cell tumour', 'a known malignant potential' and 'a slight risk of recurrence' are quoted but there is no indication of late recurrence. Under 'Dysgerminoma', it merely states that there is 'a moderate degree of malignancy'. Gynandroblastoma is given more space than Krukenberg tumour, the latter not even illustrated.

There seem to be comparatively few printer's errors. The reference on page 619 to Fig. 10/81B relates to

Krukenberg tumour but the illustration shows metastatic squamous cell carcinoma, as indicated in the caption. The index appears to be comprehensive but there are strange omissions—decidua does not seem to be mentioned. A fairly extensive list of references is given at the end of each chapter but there is little guidance in the text to further reading.

The book has many features to commend it, especially some of the illustrations. It would, however, appear to be too detailed for the average student but lacks information necessary for pathologists.

CLAUD W. TAYLOR

THE OVARY Edited by Harold C. Mack. (Pp. xi + 215; illustrated. \$12) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1968.

The well presented volume comprises the 11 main contributions to a symposium with several from workers of world-wide renown. Most chapters consist of a full though brief review of known recent work and usually embody fundamental original work of the contributor.

The content is generally investigative, employing newer techniques of bioassay, immunology, enzyme and endocrine chemistry, and the approach is often physiological and clinical. It is disappointing to find developmental anomalies are regarded as 'ovarian pathology' and it is understandable that a consideration of the relation of embryology to tumours of the ovary can only be cursive.

The critical appraisal of the ovarian and endocrine patterns of what is regarded as the Stein Leventhal syndrome of two types, adrenal and ovarian, steers away from the conventional accepted views. Another notable contribution from the originator of induced ovulation should be consulted by all those engaged in monitoring patients needing this treatment.

This volume offers interesting and stimulating reading but with certain exceptions can be no more than a useful reference for most clinical pathologists.

MAGNUS HAINES

CLINICAL PATHOLOGY IN MENTAL RETARDATION By R. D. Eastham and J. Jancar. (Pp. 364; 78 illustrations. 65s.) Bristol: John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1968.

This comparatively small book, the product of collaboration between a clinical pathologist with a major interest in biochemistry and a psychiatrist, is encyclopaedic in scope: a positive mine of information hitherto available only scattered throughout a wide and enormously varied literature.

The style is terse, almost telegraphic. The emphasis, as the title implies, is predominantly pathological, but there is sufficient clinical description to make the subject matter intelligible to the non-psychiatrist. Details are given not only of the clinical pathology findings which are currently of value in diagnosis and the assessment of response to treatment where feasible but also of the

underlying biochemical lesion when this is known. The number of metabolic disorders which are, or may be associated with mental retardation—many of them at least potentially amenable to treatment—will come as a surprise to the majority of readers. Though not a book to be read from cover to cover because its high factual content makes it somewhat indigestible, it is one that deserves to be on the shelf adjacent his elbow of every practising clinical pathologist who, however infrequently, is ever consulted about the investigation of children who are known to be, or merely suspected of being, mentally retarded. Under these circumstances the clinical pathologist will find that it enables him to give help where all too often in the past he felt quite unable to do so.

V. MARKS

HISTOCHEMISTRY, THEORETICAL AND APPLIED By A. G. Everson Pearse. 3rd. ed., Vol. 1. (Pp. 736; illustrated. 130s.) London: J. and A. Churchill. 1968.

Someone has noted how difficult it is to write a critical review without showing off. The trouble here is that Professor Pearse's new edition merits a critical review in the better sense of the adjective, but even to attempt it would need knowledge available to few and certainly not to your reviewer. *Faute de mieux*, he may comment on its value to the working pathologist.

For example, the chapter on fluorescent antibody methods is a readable, interesting, concise and objective survey of a field where practising pathologists may soon find themselves, and be grateful to Pearse. Their needs are not neglected, and distinction between utilitarian necessities and rarified research is clearly in his thought. Thus, although he notes that amyloid preserves many of its staining properties even 'after passage through the gastrointestinal tract of the mouse', he later comments: 'Resistance to enzyme attack is not usually used as a diagnostic criterion in the applied histochemistry of amyloid.' His honesty is patent and unaggressive; for example, in referring to Puchtler and Sweat's 1966 paper on the history of amyloid he writes: 'This paper clears up many of the misunderstandings, some of them repeated by me in previous editions, derived from incomplete study or imperfect translation of the original works.' Strangely enough, like so many writers on amyloid, he seems to ignore Fahr's view (1925) that amyloid's staining reactions alter as it ages.

Another curious omission is any suggestion that the suitability of basic fuchsin for the preparation of Schiff's reagent might be related to its chemical structure. Admittedly Con (1961) thought basic fuchsin's exact chemical nature of comparatively little importance to histochemists. In our laboratory we have no doubt that pararosanilin (Magenta O, Basic Red 9, C.I. 42500) supplied by Ciba (USA) as Fuchsine N gives a much better result for Schiff or aldehyde fuchsin than any other basic fuchsin; they may all be contaminated with some of their more or less methylated cousins but Ciba's Fuchsine N is outstandingly different.

Generally the instructions are concise and clearly given in the valuable appendices, although too brief on Wolman's method (p. 695), especially as there is dubiety about the reference, and on the Fettrot method (p. 697)

where the solvent is not mentioned. As in earlier editions, he usually states his preferences firmly, although on pages 414, 415, and 441 there is some uncertainty about his assessment of Fettrot against Oil Red.

The illustrations are better than before, and some of the histochemical methods in colour are now a real pleasure to study. The few misprints are less misleading than the transposition of subscripts on plates V and IX. Also sad to see (plate IIIC subscript) is end-of-the-line splitting of paraffin into: para-ffin. (Uncultured disarticulation has its entertaining side even if improper editorially; one of my sharp-eyed colleagues recently culled from journals other than this: che-motherapy and polyri-bosomes. Antime-tabolites have perhaps still to appear in print.)

The working pathologist and the good technician will both wish to have this book near their bench for practical purposes, and can be sure of interest and stimulus from the thought that has gone to the making of Pearse's Third Edition, Volume I.

A. C. LENDRUM

HANDBUCH DER HAUT—UND GESCHLECHTSKRANKHEITEN Erster Band/Erster Teil—Normale und Pathologische Anatomie der Haut I. Edited by J. Jadassohn. (Pp. 1137; illustrated. \$123.50) Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer-Verlag. 1968.

The present volume is the first of three volumes which, when complete, will constitute a uniquely thorough survey of the histology and histopathology of the skin. This is, of course, a multiple author work and the text is divided almost equally between German and English. The first 780 pages cover in remarkable detail the histology of the normal skin, including histochemistry, electron microscopy, and embryology. The remaining 300 pages are devoted to general pathological processes as they affect the skin and we have to await the appearance of the next two volumes for the sections on the special pathology of skin diseases.

There can be no doubt that this handbook will be invaluable, both for its own sake and for the comprehensive references to the literature which it includes, to all whose special interests include the histology and histopathology of the skin and related structures.

T. CRAWFORD

LECTURE NOTES ON BACTERIOLOGY By R. R. Gillies. (Pp. 188. 20s.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1968.

This short book is aimed at helping the medical student by replacing his own notes as a background to lectures on bacteriology and will no doubt be read by many immediately before examinations. It is an account of systematic bacteriology presented briefly and readably but the author could with advantage have gone further in highlighting points of importance to clinical doctors and in cutting out material of little relevance to them. For example, the cultural characteristics of *Cl. botulinum* and other Clostridia are described in some detail but there is no mention of anaerobic streptococci or bac-